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ABSTRACT

The last in a three-part series, this report highlights Oregon's most pressing child care needs and suggests actions to be taken to realize Oregon's commitment to children's futures, a commitment evident in the fact that 30 of the state's 36 counties have designated high quality child care as a top priority. In this report, recommendations are offered for legislation in the areas of child care for school-age children, training for home providers, subsidies for low-income families, scholarships for low-income students, changes to the Parental Leave Law, and the Oregon Commission on Child Care's funding. Recommendations are further offered concerning several unresolved issues, including fair pay for care providers, care for infants and toddlers, care for children of teen parents, liability insurance for care providers, the Oregon child care initiative, the Oregon Act for Better Child Care, and federal child care legislation. The report concludes with brief reviews of the commission's community meetings and statewide conference, its information and referral program, and the activities of the Office of the Child Care Coordinator. (RH)

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Child Care in Oregon:
Commitment to the Future

1988 Report to the Governor and Legislature

Oregon Commission on Child Care

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

NEIL GOLDSCHMIDT
GOVERNOR

Oregon Commission on Child Care

State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97310

Dear Governor Goldschmidt, President Kitzhaber and Speaker Katz:

On behalf of the Oregon Commission on Child Care, we are pleased to present to you our third annual report, Child Care in Oregon: Commitment to the Future.

This report is the last of a three-part series addressing the issues, problems and potential solutions critical to the development of accessible, affordable, quality child care in Oregon.

In our first report, Child Care in Oregon: A Quiet Crisis, the commission documented the woeful condition of child care in this state. We believe the report helped prompt the 1987 Legislature to pass landmark legislation that guaranteed parental leave for Oregon's working families, established the position of state child care coordinator, adopted a business tax credit to provide incentives for private-financing of child care solutions, and established an information and referral grant program to promote community-based child care options.

Our second report, Child Care in Oregon: Emerging Solutions, documented the progress of child care in Oregon. The commission focused public attention on the critical role child care plays in Oregon's economic comeback, linking accessible, affordable quality child care to a productive, dedicated work force.

In this report, Child Care in Oregon: Commitment to the Future, we acknowledge the groundswell of public interest and grassroots action on behalf of children. In the past year, thirty out of thirty-six counties have acknowledged the need for quality child care as a top priority. However, despite the significant improvement in public interest and understanding, there is still a significant amount of work to be done to improve the condition of child care in Oregon. This report highlights our most pressing child care needs, and suggest actions to be taken to realize our commitment to the future of Oregon's children.

We encourage the Governor and Legislature to sustain the momentum and progress made during 1988 by dedicating the 1989 legislative session to the welfare of Oregon's children. We pledge continued dedication to advancing the growth of quality child care in Oregon, by gaining support and participation from all levels of government, the private sector, foundations and child care advocates.

Sincerely,

Pamela Stebbeds — Thomas Tison

Pamela Stebbeds
Commission Chair 1988

Tom Tison
Commission Chair 1989

cc: Members of the 65th
Legislative Assembly

1988
Oregon Commission on Child Care

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Oregon Commission on Child Care
1988 Report to the Governor and Legislature

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Our Special Thanks...

to the following individuals who were especially supportive of the Child Care Commission during 1988.

Mary Louise McClintock for her partnership in both the Oregon Child Care Initiative, and the day care liability insurance study, as well as her close alliance with the Commission on Child Care... **'Lyn Horine, Aphra Katsev, Christie Joachim, Jean Vercouteren** and **Jo Manske** for their continuing volunteer support to the information and referral programs throughout the state...**Freddye Webb-Petett** for her willingness to work with the commission on complicated and difficult issues for low-income families... **Colleen Dyrud** for her steadfast representation of Oregon's school-age children and vital participation at commission meetings on their behalf... **Gail Toft-Vizzini** for editing and composing this report...**Jan Berreth** at Farley Printing Co., for her assistance with the printing of this report... **Debra Buckley** for her technical support in bringing this report to its present condition... **Randi Rice** and **Donna Lee** for their photography... **Louise Marsh** and **Amy Tanne** of the National Council of Jewish Women for their concerted effort to link public and private efforts on behalf of children... and to **Karen Moffat, Gary Van Horn, Jerry Burns, Sue Abrams, Tom Perry** and **Deanne Chandler**, state employees who give extra attention to the commission so that Oregon's children and caregivers have a voice in state government.

And thanks to the day care providers throughout Oregon who cared for our children while we attended to the business of the commission.

Acknowledgments

The majority of this report was written members of the Oregon Commission on Child Care as part of their sub-committee work over the last three years. In addition, four special consultants contributed to sections for which they were distinctly qualified. The commission gratefully acknowledges the contribution of the following non-commission authors:

Mary Bromel, Portland Public Schools, "Child Care for Teen Parents"

Colleen Dyrud, Department of Education, "Child Care for School-Age Children"

Pamela Fullam, Oregon Association for the Education of Young Children, "Oregon Act for Better Child Care"

Mary Louise McClintock, Department of Human Resources, "Liability Insurance", "Child Care Coordinator and Employer Sponsored Child Care".

Introduction

Child Care in Oregon:
Commitment to the Future

Over 100 years ago Abraham Lincoln observed:

> A child is a person who is going to carry on what you have started. He is going to sit where you are sitting and when you are gone, attend to those things which you think are important. You may adopt all the policies you please, but how they are carried out depends on him. He will assume control of your cities, your states and your nation. He is going to move in and take over your churches, your schools, your universities and your corporations. All your books are going to be judged, praised or condemned by him. The fate of humanity is in his hands.

Lincoln reminds us that our commitment to the future must begin with a commitment to children. Our social and economic well being will be entrusted to today's infants, toddlers and young children. Investments made in our children, will return to us a future full of prosperity, security and promise. If we fail to invest in our children, the future social and economic costs will be significant.

There should be no doubt that Lincoln's words speak directly to our need for quality child care, available to all. This is especially true when you review some telling statistics about present-day family life.

- Only 10% of American families are "Leave It to Beaver" or "Donna Reed" families where mom stays home and dad is the breadwinner. Oregon is no exception. More than 50 percent of mothers in Oregon with children under the age of six are in the work force. This percentage is expected to increase to 65 percent by 1995. Mothers are the fastest expanding segment of the work force, and mothers with children under the age of one are the fastest growing segment of all.

- Contrary to popular belief, mothers are not always in the work force out of choice. Studies show that 70 percent of the mothers in the work force seek employment out of economic necessity. In 1987 the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families found that 35% of two-parent families would live below the poverty line if both parents were not employed. In many cases the mother's income makes a difference between independence and public assistance, between middle class status and poverty.

- The economic necessity of work is most evident for the 25% of working mothers who are raising their children alone. Of these women, 40% are raising their children without any child support.

This third commission report celebrates the countless number of local organizations and individuals who are committed to providing quality care for the children of working Oregonians. These dedicated parents, professionals, educators and public officials have labored for years under difficult conditions, with inadequate compensation and little or no public recognition or support. Through their efforts in communities throughout Oregon, we have come to appreciate the wisdom of Lincoln's insight. Through their testimony, research and advice, we recognize the significant work that needs to be accomplished to insure that safe, affordable, high quality child care is available to every child.

The time has come to translate commitment into action. State and local governments, corporations and foundations must match the dedication and sacrifice of private individuals and local organizations. This report indentifies Oregon's most immediate and pressing needs, and recommends an effective course of State and private action.

Commission Legislation

CHILD CARE FOR SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

TRAINING FOR HOME PROVIDERS

SUBSIDIES FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

CHANGES TO THE PARENTAL LEAVE LAW

COMMISSION SUNSET AND BUDGET

Child Care for School-Age Children

The schools, after all, do have a stake in what Johnny does after school -- he brings it with him to class the next day.

Vern Duncan
Superintendent of Instruction

Approximately 50,000 children in Oregon are latchkey children; children who are without adult supervision when school is not in session. Demographic changes in our society, and economic conditions affecting families, have made this fact a part of our children's lives. Our system of child care and school programming for these children has not kept pace with the need.

These children face a variety of potential risks: accidents, abuse, loneliness, boredom, lowered academic performance, involvement with drugs or alcohol and early sexual activity. Children as young as five and six must cope with the emotional and social stresses of being on their own every day, without adult supervision. Older children -- 11, 12, 13 -- also must handle tremendous pressures and responsibilities without adult guidance.

Parents are the primary source for the supervision and guidance of their children, and given the realities of today's society, parents need support and resources in this crucial task. Latchkey children require the attention of the community, not just the attention of the individual families. A community-based solution to the care of school-age children involves the cooperation and determination of parents, schools, churches, businesses, child care providers, social service and youth service agencies, local government, and private individuals.

School buildings are logical sites to house before and after school programs. Schools are convenient, they solve transportation problems, they are familiar and comfortable places for children, and they are under-utilized when school is not in session. Even if a school building is not suitable for a school-age child care program, local school administrators still have a responsibility to work with the community to find solutions for latchkey children.

Vern Duncan, Oregon's superintendent of schools said, "I would open up the schools for programs in the non-school hours. I'm not saying our teachers should take on this responsibility. However, we should collaborate, coordinate our efforts, or at least make it possible for high-quality providers of children's programs to come in and use our facilities."

The commission has chosen to support the reintroduction of a bill that would provide a matching grant to school districts that collaborate with the community to provide school-age child care programs. The bill requests $1 million to be awarded in a competitive grant process administered by the Oregon Department of Education.

Recommendations:

1. Pass legislation to provide matching grants to school districts that establish school-age child care programs.

2. Continue to educate the public on the importance of well-designed, quality after-school care programs for children in grades 1 through 8.

3. Explore funding sources for low-income school-age child care scholarships.

4. Ensure that information about school-age child care programs and activities is included in the child care resource and referral systems.

5. Advocate for training opportunities for providers of school-age child care to insure quality programs.

6. Seek funding for studies on school-age child care issues in Oregon on the topics of academic performance, delinquency, drug/alcohol/sex experimentation, effects of self-care and sibling care.

Training for Home Providers

"Working people are working for the present. Child care workers are taking care of the future."

William Clinton
Governor of Arkansas

Contrary to popular belief, more children are cared for in a home setting than in day care centers. In Oregon, 110,000 children are cared for by home providers each year, representing 80% of all children in care. Despite the proliferation of home provider care, this segment of the child care system remains underserved by professional training and development programs, and unregulated by the state Children's Services Division (CSD). Instead, current state law limits CSD involvement with home providers to a voluntary registration program that provides no guarantee of quality care. This system is misleading and confusing to parents, and does little to improve the quality of home provider care.

For more than a year, the commission has encouraged and participated in a public debate over the appropriate state role in the home provider system. The debate has focused on registration versus licensing of home providers. Registration requires the home provider to file an application with the CSD, submit to an Oregon criminal investigation and participate in a minimal orientation program. Licensing requires a life safety inspection of the home and formal child care training.

Opponents of licensing argue that the inspection process will intrude into the provider's home, that the process creates needless regulation of a service that has always been conducted informally, and it would add substantial regulatory costs to the provider and the state.

Proponents of licensing argue that a formal regulatory system will increase the level of provider training, reduce the turnover rate and build public confidence in the safety and integrity of home provider care. As the quality of care improves, home providers will be able to attract more appropriate fees for service, and compete successfully in the child care marketplace.

The commission proposes a middle course of action that couples mandatory state licensing and accreditation with local community-based assessment and training programs. To help further reduce regulatory costs, we recommend that local assessment teams be developed within communities to conduct fire and sanitation inspections, as well as program and site evaluations. Such a program would require limited state investments to leverage community resources, and would rely heavily on volunteers recruited from community organizations.

Recommendations:

1. Replace home provider registration with a system of state licensing and accreditation, that includes home provider training and site assessment.

2. Provide grant funding to community organizations, such as provider support groups, community colleges, USDA food sponsors, or resource and referral organizations, to provide a minimum of 15 hours of technical assistance and training to providers, and to recruit and train site assessment volunteers.

3. Develop cooperative relationships between community accreditation programs and agencies authorized to perform fire and sanitation inspections. Develop programs that allow community accreditation programs to supplement or replace existing inspection programs.

4. Limit payments of state child care subsidies to licensed and accredited providers.

Subsidies for Low-Income Families

"The children of this country are in the most desperate condition they have ever been in. There isn't going to be a work force, a productive work force, in this country if these trends continue".

Jule M. Sugarman, Secretary
Social and Health Services
State of Washington

Currently in Oregon, as well as nationally, there is a movement towards assisting welfare recipients in reaching and maintaining self-sufficiency. According to Adult and Family Services division staff, 75% of people on public assistance who found jobs returned to welfare within two years. Lack of medical care and lack of child care subsidies were the reasons most often stated.

In previous commission reports, recommendations addressed the problems in Oregon's system of providing child care subsidies. However, lack of funding has prevented the major components of those recommendations from being adopted. We believe it is cost effective in the long run to invest funds to improve and stabilize the lives of the children of this state when children see their parents becoming skilled, attaining and retaining employment, and building and improving their lives, are more likely to look to the future with hope and optimism. These children are more likely to stay in school, become skilled and establish a success-oriented identity.

National research shows that money spent in child care is an investment. The day-care family support program run by the Yale Child Study Center cost $3,000 a year per child. At the outset, more than half of the families were receiving public assistance; ten years after the project ended, only two of fifteen were on assistance compared to half of the control families. The difference in welfare costs alone totaled more than $60,000 at the ten-year follow-up. In addition, no child had required residential treatment, no child had been in foster care, none had been arrested, and only one child required psychiatric help.

Child-care subsidies must be tied to the real earning power of the parents. For low-income families, child care may cost one-third to one-half of the family's monthly paycheck. Parents who receive subsidies require stable and adequate payments for child care in order to retain employment.

Families receiving child care subsidies are trying to meet too many subsistence needs with too few dollars. Often they are faced with an eviction notice, a utility shut-off notice, or an unexpected medical emergency. In those situations, the child care payment goes to meet the emergency. The parent becomes delinquent in payments to the child care provider. The consequence is that many providers are not taking children whose parents receive subsidies, which makes it even more difficult for the family to find care.

Research states that drop-outs are three and one-half times as likely as high school graduates to be arrested and six times as likely to be unwed parents. The cost of an undereducated, unskilled population is enormous. Lack of consistent and adequate child care is one reason teen parents quit school. Our current welfare system penalizes parents who attempt to gain skills through education. The unskilled and undereducated must be encouraged and supported to return to school in order to avoid becoming dependent on welfare. Child care is an essential component of any welfare system which promotes self-sufficiency.

Recommendations:

1. Subsidize child care at levels that reflect the costs necessary to comply with state and federal regulations.
2. Revise eligibility for full child care subsidies to 50% of Oregon median income.
3. Simplify payment systems so that child care subsidies are accessible to those who need them.
4. Pay child care providers directly.
5. Provide child care subsidies to parents who are in a training program or school.
6. Develop within the Department of Human Resources a comprehensive and uniform system to gather data and provide statistical support for creative planning for child care reform.

Scholarships for Low-Income Students

"This country spends $60 more to equip each soldier than to raise each child."

Ellen Galinsky
Researcher, Bank Street College

After a two-year wait, one Oregon college student finally got an opening for her child in the campus child care center. She went to the financial aid office to seek help with the cost, only to find there was no help. She has been leaving her child alone while she attends school, and literally runs back to her apartment between classes to be with him.

Mari, a naturalized citizen and single parent of a four-year-old, lives in a housing project and has no car or telephone. Mari isn't unique. Oregon must recognize that many of today's students are parents and few resources are available to help them manage school and child care. The average age of today's community college student is 30. More than half are women and many have dependent children. Universities are seeing an increase in the number of students with children. As more Oregon adults begin or return to college, the additional cost of reliable child care becomes a critical barrier to student success.

The limited child care subsidies available through Adult and Family Services or the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) are available only to their clients and only for approved vocational training of two years or less. The student-parent who pursues an occupation that requires a four-year degree is not eligible for this assistance.

As federal financial aid continues to decrease, Oregon must develop instate means to reduce barriers to student success. Decent, affordable child care for students is an investment that will yield productive members of the work force. The commission proposes that this state fund a $1.5 million designated allotment in the biennial budget of the Scholarship Commission. The funds provide child care subsidies for low-income students completing a bachelor's degree or associate degree at state universities or community colleges. The bill allows up to 5% of the funding to be used for administrative expenses for the Scholarship Commission. A potential funding source would be money generated by a cap in the state child care credit. By capping the credit at $50,000 of taxable income, $1.5 million would be generated to support the scholarship bill. Funds would be disbursed to college financial-aid directors via the Scholarship Commission.

This bill has been discussed among university and community college student groups, financial aid directors and the Oregon Scholarship Commission, and is unanimously supported.

Recommendation:

1. Fund the recommended $1.5 million to the Scholarship Commission to subsidize child care for low-income students pursuing an associate or bachelor degree.

Changes to the Parental Leave Law

"Until women start reproducing by splitting like worms, child care is not a feminist issue."

Elinor Gugenheimer, President
Child Care Action Campaign

In 1987, the Oregon Legislature passed Oregon's parental leave law, making Oregon one of the first states to guarantee the right of parents to be at home with their newborn or newly adopted child. The law provides for a maximum of 12 weeks of unpaid leave and return to the parents' former job. It applies equally to mothers and fathers, however, the leave is for a total of 12 weeks to be shared between the two parents. Employees may, but are not required to, use any accumulated vacation, sick or compensatory leave during parental leave. The law applies to all employers of more than 25 employees, but exempts employers who have cafeteria plans that provide an equal parental leave benefit.

In late 1987, the Bureau of Labor adopted administrative rules implementing the parental leave law. Some of the bureau's interpretations of the new law caused upheaval in the business community and did not conform to the commission's intentions in proposing the legislation. The following two issues were of particular concern:

1. Whether employers are required to allow employees to use sick time during parental leave, even if the employer's policy requires the employee to be sick in order to use sick leave.
2. Whether an employer, with a cafeteria plan that limits the use of sick time, is disqualified from claiming exemption from the parental leave law.

In August 1988, the attorney general issued an opinion regarding the above issues. He stated that an employee's ability to use vacation, sick or other compensatory time off during parental leave depends on the established leave policies of the employer. Therefore, the parental leave law does not require employers to pay employees for sick leave if the employer's sick leave policy requires an employee to be sick. Similarly, the limits for using sick leave in a cafeteria plan do not disqualify an employer from being exempt from the law.

In addition to the above issues concerning sick leave, the commission is aware that adoptive parents are concerned about the age limit for adopted children. These parents feel strongly that the age should be raised to twelve years from six, as it is as important to have special bonding with an adopted child between the ages of six and twelve as it is for a child under six.

Recommendations:

1. Conform to the attorney general's opinion regarding employer leave policies and the parental leave law.
2. Amend the qualifying age for adoptive children from six to twelve.

Commission Sunset and Budget

"You know how you feel when you stick your head back under the covers on a rainy day, and your mom brings you a cup of cocoa with marshmallows on it? That's how your (last) report made me feel."

Bill Thomas, Director
Children's Services Division

The 1985 Legislature created the Commission on Child Care to study the issues of affordable, accessible and quality child care. The commission's original mandate was limited to conducting monthly meetings and submitting a report to the governor and legislature at the start of each biennium. The 1987 Legislature expanded the commission's responsibilities to include administration of a grant program to promote community based child care information and referral programs. Without legislative reauthorization, the commission will be terminated on July 1, 1989.

The commission consists of 21 members, appointed by the governor, senate president and house speaker. Commission membership is intended to represent the state legislature, child care providers, local government, the legal profession, business management, labor, the Commission for Women and child care consumers. Legislative members serve for two-year terms, while all other members serve for three-year terms. Commissioners serve on a voluntary basis, and are compensated only for actual and necessary travel expenses.

The commission operates without administrative staff and offices. All administrative work is performed by commission members, with advice and assistance from the Executive Department, the Office of the Child Care Coordinator, the Department of Human Resources, the Department of Education and the Justice Department. In addition, the commission is supported by parents, providers, corporations, educators, child care advocates and local organizations throughout the state.

The commission does not have a large budget, but does need funding for the basic operating costs, travel and mileage reimbursements, stationery and postage and the major expense of producing the Commission's report to the governor and legislature. During its first three years of operation, the commission spent about $35,000 and achieved the following:

* Published two reports and prepared for publication a third.
* Administered a $100,000 information and referral grant program.
* Conducted more than 25 regular business meetings.
* Sponsored two statewide conferences and more than 12 regional forums.
* Assisted with the recruitment of the corporate child care investments.
* Helped to establish the Oregon Child Care Initiative Foundation.
* Proposed and worked for approval of parental leave legislation.

If the commission is successful in obtaining state funding of some of the proposals set forth in this report, the commission's role as advocate, auditor and ombudsman will increase. As a result, greater attention will need to be given to formal administrative matters, greater support will be needed to keep track of the various activities and programs and greater funding will be required to reimburse commission members who live in southern and eastern Oregon. The 1989-91 budget reflects the commission's increasing activities and responsibilities by including additional requests for part time clerical support and allowances for travel and mileage reimbursement. Even with the increased support, administrative costs for the next two-year period is less that $15,000, in addition to he voluntary efforts of commission members.

Recommendations:

1. Reauthorize the commission and the governor's recommended budget to 1993.

2. Add a position to the commission to represent pediatric medicine.

3. Expand representation from central Oregon and home providers when reappointments become available.

Unresolved Issues

FAIR PAY FOR CARE PROVIDERS

CARE FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

CARE FOR CHILDREN OF TEEN PARENTS

LIABILITY INSURANCE FOR CARE PROVIDERS

OREGON CHILD CARE INITIATIVE

OREGON ACT FOR BETTER CHILD CARE

FEDERAL CHILD CARE LEGISLATION

Fair Pay for Child Care Providers

"You look at our tax code and you would actually be better off raising thoroughbred horses."

The Honorable Patricia Schroeder, Colorado
U.S. House of Representatives

Quality child care is labor intensive. It requires skilled care-givers to work with very small groups of children. Often, quality is impaired by frequent staff turnover.

As long as the child care industry is supported primarily by young parents at the beginning of their earning lives, care-giver wages will remain below the poverty level. Real hourly earnings of fulltime care-givers dropped in real dollars from $2.67 in 1979 to $1.99 in 1986. The care-giver shortage will remain critical until it becomes possible to earn a decent living in the field.

Solutions to the quality - affordability - compensation dilemma require that we acknowledge that good care is imperative for children during their formative years.

Recommendations:

1. Continue to emphasize the long-range cost effectiveness of quality care, and emphasize that it requires the collaborative investment of parents, providers, employers, schools, churches, government and agencies.
2. Establish a consistent basic level of care-giver training through the vocational education system at community colleges throughout the state. The funding combination of tuition, local taxes and state reimbursement allows this training to be affordable and ongoing as long as the market demands.
3. Establish a family day-care specialist, in Children's Services Division Day Care Unit, who will administer a fund to develop in-service training for home providers through a variety of local nonprofit organizations.
4. Establish a child care training fund that provides scholarships or reimbursement for home providers and day care centers to become accredited.
5. Establish a low-interest loan and grant fund to renovate child care homes and centers and to purchase major equipment.
6. Establish child care planning and coordination bodies in each county with representatives from business, government, education and services.
7. Involve city or county sanitarians and fire marshals in visits to and consultation for family providers.
8. Educate the public to identify, value and demand quality child care, and to understand the relationship between quality pay and quality care.

Care for Infants and Toddlers

"Infant care is the most acute need."

Linn and Benton counties
R & R Quarterly Report

Day care for infants and toddlers (under age two and a half) continues to be the most difficult to find. All of the commission's information and referral programs listed this as the care most often needed as well as the most difficult to locate.

Quality care during a child's early years is extremely important because the rate of physical, emotional, social and intellectual development for a child under age three is greater than at any other age.

There is no assurance that Oregon's infants and toddlers receive quality care. Caring for this vulnerable group requires special skills and knowledge but there are few skilled care-givers. In regulated centers, smaller group size and staff ratios are required, yet providers are often not compensated for this. Most of Oregon's infants and toddlers are being cared for in totally unregulated situations.

Infant and toddler care requires substantially more staff than care for preschoolers. Oregon regulations require 250% more staff when caring for infants and toddlers (1-to-4 ratio of staff to children compared to 1-to-10 for preschoolers). Yet, the subsidy rates paid by Adult and Family Services and Children's Services do not reflect this additional staff cost.

Recommendations:

1. The state should monitor all programs that provide care to infants and toddlers. At a minimum, all facilities caring for this vulnerable age group should meet safety, health, group size and ratio requirements.

2. Oregon should recognize and encourage payment of real costs for infants and toddlers by setting subsidy rates that reflect the added staff costs caused by ratio requirements. This will encourage more providers to serve this age group.

3. The state should develop training resources for infant and toddler care-givers. This should include encouraging universities and community colleges to offer appropriate courses and on-site training opportunities.

4. The state should educate the public on the importance of skilled infant and toddler care.

Care for Children of Teen Parents

"One-half of the jobs created in 1990 will require education beyond high school. We may face a critical shortage of workers to fill these jobs...We should not let business off the hook on the child care issue."

Ann McGloughlin
U.S. Secretary of Labor

Teen pregnancy and parenting represent the primary reasons that females drop out of school. The effects are economically and socially pronounced. Statistically, young women requiring welfare as teens will remain on public assistance an average of 10 years. There is a familial pattern of teen parenting that contributes to the "feminization of poverty" and severely impacts the lives of children.

Child care must be an integral part of any program addressing teen parents. The service is needed not only to allow a teen parent to complete an education program, but also to provide parenting skills. Serving the teen parent and her child through developmental day-care services assures the best possible start for her child. These services must emphasize bonding, parent participation, child development education, health issues and early identification of developmental delays. While schools work with a teen parent to address her education and transition to work, quality developmental child care is needed for her chid.

The need for day care services does not end with the completion of high school. The ability to transition young women into self-sufficiency is directly impacted by the availability of subsidized care for their children while they receive job training or post secondary education.

To this end, the commission continues to advocate for both school- and community-based developmental day care for the children of teen parents. The options explored must move the teen parent toward self-sufficiency and her child to a way out of the cycle of poverty.

Recommendations:

1. Encourage school-based services that include day care, parenting education, self-esteem counseling and post secondary career development.

2. Provide training for both center and family day-care providers who serve teen parents.

3. Increase access to developmental screening within certain centers serving teen parents.

4. Encourage the transfer of children to Head Start to continue developmental assistance.

5. Advocate for day care assistance for post high school training, education and/or employment programs for teen parents.

6. Advocate for before and after school programs that provide supervision to young teens to reduce the rate of teen pregnancy.

7. Support funding and research efforts targeted at demonstrating the effectiveness of day care for teen parents toward school completion and reduced reliance on public assistance.

Liability Insurance for Child Care Providers

"We think fear of liability is overblown. We avoid it by having the best qualified teachers on staff."

Isaac Heller, Heller Construction regarding his own on-site center

The cost and availability of liability insurance continues to cause problems for child care providers. Insurance premiums can consume a significant portion of a center's operating budget. The commission has received reports of center closures in which the cost of insurance premiums was a primary factor. Moreover, it continues to be extremely difficult for family day-care providers to find and/or afford liability insurance.

Senate Bill 323, the 1987 state insurance reform legislation, makes it permissible for child care facilities to form an organization solely for the purpose of purchasing insurance as a group.

In May 1988, the commission and the state child care coordinator's office contracted with an independent consultant to study the feasibility of a group liability insurance program for Oregon child care providers. The analysis of that first survey will be available early in 1989.

Other changes enacted by the insurance reform bill may affect the cost of child care liability insurance in the next several years. Insurance companies must file price statistics with the state insurance commissioner for the period from April 1988 to May 1989. Analysis of pricing will be completed by 1990.

Recommendation:

1. Continue to support feasibility studies leading to a group liability insurance fund for Oregon child care providers.

Oregon Child Care Initiative

"I have a message for other business executives based on my own experience: Quit talking about day care and do something about it."

Isaac Heller, President
I. Heller Construction Co., New Jersey

Oregon's business community has begun to awaken to the economic and social necessity of quality child care. Private foundations and charitable organizations have begun to increase their involvement and interest in child care projects.

These developments are a positive sign of change in attitude and intention by the private sector, and represent a new opportunity for public-private partnerships on behalf of Oregon's children. Taking advantage of this new opportunity requires a comprehensive, organized response to matching limited public support with increased corporate and foundation support for child care programs and services. Despite the extraordinary efforts of individuals and organizations in communities throughout Oregon, no such comprehensive response exists that would attract statewide corporate and foundation support.

During 1988, the commission joined a small group of child care advocates and corporate representatives to create a private non-profit foundation dedicated to increasing family access to safe, affordable, high quality child care. The Oregon Child Care Initiative Foundation was incorporated in December 1988 to achieve the following initial objectives:

1. Establish a structure to develop and implement a statewide initiative.
2. Establish or strengthen community-based child care planning groups.
3. Provide training and technical assistance to care-givers.
4. Establish or strengthen local child care resources and referral agencies.
5. Strengthen consumer education about child care.

The foundation has begun to develop a formal organizational structure, is negotiating with the Oregon Community Foundation for financial and administrative services, has filed for tax exempt status, and is preparing strategic marketing and programming plans. During 1989, the foundation will begin to solicit corporate and foundation support for community-based child care grants. In particular, the foundation will seek to coordinate its grant activities with state efforts to devise a comprehensive statewide system of community-based child care resource and referral agencies. It wil also work to provide increased support for provider training programs and to provide increased direct assistance for low income and student parents.

The board of the Oregon Child Care Initiative includes representatives from corporations, children's organizations, the State of Oregon, and the Oregon Commission on Child Care. The foundation receives technical assistance and advice from the commission, U.S. National Bank, U.S. West Communications, the state's Child Care Resource and Referral Technical Assistance Office, and the Oregon Child Care Coordinator.

Inquiries may be directed to Shirley Herrick, 20580 SW 98th Avenue, Tualatin, Oregon 97062.

Oregon Act for Better Child Care

"The good news is that the Congress and state legislatures are no longer debating over whether or not there is a role for government in child care. They are now debating how to be involved in change."

The Honorable Christopher Dodd
U.S. Senator, Connecticut

During the 1989 legislative session, Oregon will have the opportunity to pass the Oregon Act for Better Child Care (ABC) to help parents pay for child care. The legislation was the result of work by a coalition of child care advocates, and has the support of the Commission on Child Care. It is patterned, in part, on the federal Act for Better Child Care, and has been adapted to encourage responsible partnerships of schools, communities, business, unions, state and local governments in Oregon.

The bill will support a broad base of child care needs and environments including: child care for infants and toddlers, pre-school and school-age children; care for children whose parents work odd hours; and care for handicapped children living in families that earn less than the state median income.

The bill covers consumer education to help parents find and make wise child care choices that meets their needs, and funds training for child care workers in child development, guidance, discipline, health, and safety.

The Oregon bill would help to increase parental access to care, providing loans or grants to start or broaden child care services, and the development of local resource and referral service to link parents with care.

Surveys indicate that most people want government to invest more of their tax dollars in programs for children. We know that for every $1 spent on quality early child care $3-$10 are saved because fewer children need special education, fewer drop out of high school, more become employed and support themselves, and fewer get in trouble with the law than those without quality early care.

Oregon child care advocates feel that an Oregon Act for Better Child Care is a wise investment in our children, our families and our workforce.

For more information on the Oregon Act for Better Child Care contact Pamela Fullam, P.O. Box 1455, Tualatin, OR 97062

Federal Child Care Legislation

"The lack of a national policy on child care is a formula for disaster."

John F. Kennedy, 1963

In 1988, members of Congress recognized the need for federal child care legislation, and there was a great response to the call for action. Over 100 bills concerning child care were filed, showing various approaches to child care issues.

The bill of choice was the Act for Better Child Care (S1885 and HR3660) sponsored by Senator Dodd and Representative Kildee. The bill had good support, but certain aspects of the bill were controversial and valuable lobbying time was lost while the bill language was modified. The ABC bill would appropriate $2.5 billion for child care and include:, funding assistance for low income families (75%), funding services to improve the quality and availability of child care (15%), with 10% reserved for administrative costs. The funds require 25% in state matching funds and would be administered by the state. If fully funded as proposed, Oregon would receive approximately $25 million. The bill died in the last few days of the 1988 congressional session.

Both of Oregon's senators proposed child care legislation. Senator Mark Hatfield's bill (S2404) amends Title XX of the Social Security Act to appropriate $1.5 billion over three years, designated for child care and targeting low-income families. The bill also extends credits to businesses establishing child care facilities and creates a national advisory panel.

Senator Robert Packwood's bill addresses affordability using the tax credit approach. Packwood's Child Care Tax Incentive of 1988 would increase the existing tax credit for low-income and moderate-income families. It would make the credit refundable to low-income families who pay little or no tax, and the credit or refund would be received by the parent throughout the year.

The commission supports these efforts to pass child care legislation, recognizes the need for federal government to do what states cannot do.

A unified approach is needed in 1989. The commission urges advocates to keep child care high on the federal agenda and to get behind legislation that has the best chance for success.

Recommendation:

1. The commission encourages Oregonians to review the congressional effort in Washington regarding child care legislation and advise their congressmen of their support.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND STATEWIDE CONFERENCE

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL PROGRAM

OFFICE OF CHILD CARE COORDINATOR

Community Meetings and Statewide Conference

"I sometimes think that this generation of mothers will be remembered in history as the ones, who through this transition to equality, carried the burden, the guilt, and all the anxieties to make this country a better place for their daughters and sons."

Jay Belsky
Professor of Human Development
Penn State University

The commission provides a forum to citizens around the state to express their concerns about child care. During the summer of 1988, the commission held public hearings in seven locations throughout Oregon. These evening meetings attracted working parents, providers and agency representatives who could not attend our normal commission meetings. Meetings were held in Portland, Tualatin, Salem, Lincoln City, Roseburg, and for the first time in Bend and La Grande.

Citizens frequently raised concerns about liability insurance for child care providers, affordability of child care (especially for low income parents), lack of regulation of family child care providers, insufficient availability of infant and toddler care, and the financial problems of operating child care centers.

Each hearing served a positive purpose by providing a setting for members of communities to meet for the first time to discuss common problems. As a result, local networks of child care advocates have developed, adding citizens and organizations to the commissions growing mailing list. These community meetings have served to promote organization and action at a local level.

The commission also sponsored a state conference in June at the Silver Creek Conference Center. This year's conference theme focused on legislation for the 1989 legislative session. Participants reviewed all proposed legislation to be filed, and worked in small sub-committees to finalize the text of each bill. Legislators were on hand to consult and advise on matters of bill drafting, testifying, and lobbying.

The commission repeated its request to county commissions to sponsor participation from home providers. This year four counties followed through by paying conference expenses for a local family day-care provider or working parent. Our thanks go to the Crook, Tillamook, Union, and Deschutes county commissions.

Information and Referral Program

"It's no longer a question of which party speaks for families, but which policies will be effective in helping families meet their own responsibilities."

David Blankenhorn
Director, Institute for American Values

The New York-based Child Care Action Campaign released an economic paper with the following observation: "There are, in place, certain elements of a national child care system which can be built on - especially in certain communities, where dedicated groups of public officials, early childhood educators, business executives, and parents, have joined to create pockets of excellence. Such communities are characterized by a comprehensive resource and referral system, a mixed system of funding, special attention to the professional status and salaries of child care providers, and an overall commitment to expanding and enhancing the child care system."

The commission has administered a grant that creates information and referral programs; the grant money was appropriated by the 1987 legislature. As required by the bill which created the $100,000 grant program, the four grant-recipients are matching the funds they received, have put information and referral agencies in place, and are systematically keeping records of data they gather. These four communities, characterized by the Child Care Action Campaign as "pockets of excellence" are Linn, Benton, Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, Marion, Polk and Lane counties.

Seven training and networking sessions were conducted by the Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency, which has worked with the commission on this project. By March 1988, all four programs were in place.

Through its work in recording and compiling statistics about referrals, the commission learned that referral is only a small part of the program. Parent education, recruiting and assisting home providers, getting employers involved, and sharing information are significant activities of our information and referral grantees.

In the communities where information and referral programs exist there are successes and challenges:

* Infant and toddler child care are the type of care most often requested and the most difficult to find.

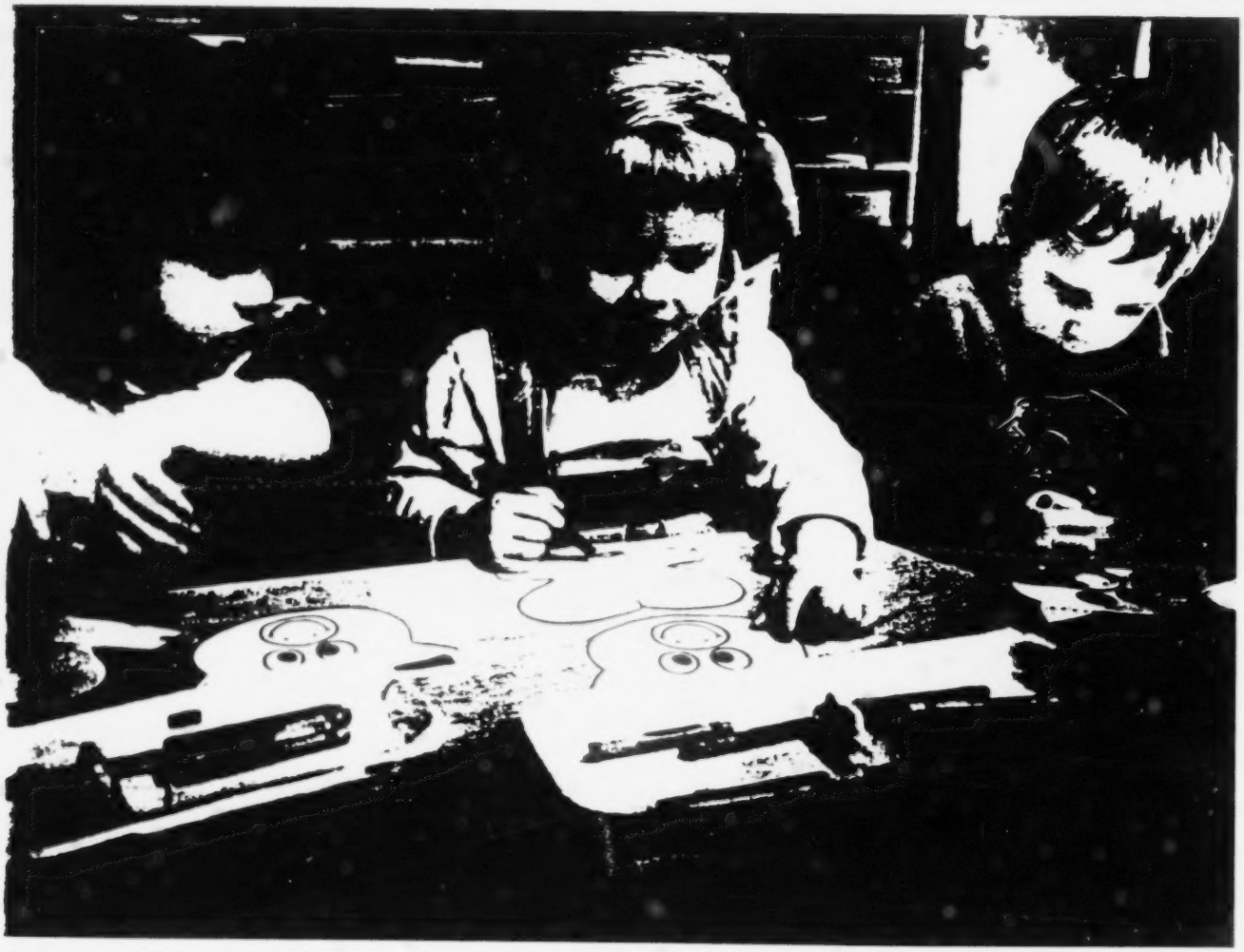
* Serving the needs of handicapped children has been easier than anticipated. The I & Rs have been able to put parents in touch with existing programs for the handicapped.

* Family day-care providers are helped in acquiring clients and improving the quality of their service.

A long list of activities and problems identified by the I & R grantees can be found in the commission's report on the information and referral grant. Our conclusion is that the Information and Referral Program has greatly improved access to child care in communities and has gathered much useful information about child care. The grantees are working toward independent funding and continued operation when the grant ends. The commission is convinced that a replication of this program during the next biennium will create more "pockets of excellence" in Oregon.

Recommendation:

1. The state should continue and expand funding of the I & R grant program so that other communities in Oregon can improve access to quality child care. The commission is sponsoring legislation which would provide new grants for unserved and under-served communities. In addition, the state should consider providing ongoing funding of existing I&R programs to insure that this promising new network of community organizations collects and compiles valuable statistics on the character and extent of need for child care services.



Office of the Child Care Coordinator

"Employers who are smart will help their employees juggle productive work lives with happy home lives."

Julie Emery
Deputy Director, Women's Bureau
U. S. Department of Labor

The Office of Child Care Coordinator was established in 1987 in the Department of Human Resources and given the dual responsibility to promote coordination among state agencies involved in child care and encourage employer involvement in child care. Child Care Coordinator Mary Louise McClintock has established an interagency child care task force, and is working with the Office of the Governor to develop a long-term child care agenda. The Office of Child Care includes a Salem headquarters and a Springfield field office. It serves as an ongoing resource on Oregon child care issues for members of the public, local and national organizations, the federal and local governments, and other state agencies.

The child care coordinator works with the state employment division, the Oregon Department of Economic Development, and the Commission on Child Care, child care providers and with business organizations to spread awareness of the economic impact of child care. The office also advertises the availability of tax credits for to employers who provide dependent-care assistance.

Employer interest in child care continues to grow. From September 1, 1987 to September 1, 1988 the child care coordinator's office consulted with over 125 employers regarding employer-sponsored child care programs. In addition, the office responded to numerous inquiries from employees and labor groups, child care providers, and child care consultants.

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In addition, many excellent reference materials are listed in the 1987 and 1986 commission reports. Copies are available from the state library.

I am the child.
All the world waits for my coming.
All the Earth watches with interest
to see what I shall become.
Civilization hangs in the balance, For what
I am, the world of tomorrow will be...
I am the child.
I have come into your world, about which
I know nothing. Why I came I know not;
How I came... I know not. I am curious;
I am interested.
I am the child.
You hold in your hand my destiny.
You determine, largely, whether I shall
succeed or fail. Give me, I pray you, those
things that make for happiness. Train me,
I beg you, that I may be a blessing to
the world.

From "Child's Appeal"
Mamie Gene Cole

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